

Solid Waste Advisory Committee

October 7, 2008; 4:15PM
General Services Department
Combined Operations and Maintenance Facility
311 North State Street

Meeting Minutes

The meeting was convened at 4:15 PM in the Conference Room at the General Services Department Combined Operations and Maintenance Facility.

Present: Councilor Keith Nyhan, Chair, Councilor Liz Blanchard, Councilor Bill Stetson, Councilor Rob Werner, Councilor Fred Keach, Councilor Dick Lemieux, Greg Banks, Melanie Doiron, Jeff Myers, Mike Russell

Staff: Chip Chesley, Bob McManus, Vanessa Ghiden, Pat Winn

Guests: Mayor Bouley, Natalie Starr and Ted Siegler from DSM Environmental Inc.

The meeting was convened at 4:15 PM by Councilor Nyhan.

Review Minutes of September 30, 2008

Councilor Nyhan opened the meeting and asked if everyone had a chance to read minutes from the September 30th meeting. Greg Banks noted that Councilor Bennett attended the meeting. The minutes will so note. Councilor Keach motioned to accept the minutes and Greg Banks seconded it. He also welcomed Jeff Myers a new appointee to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

Pay As You Throw Discussion

Chip opened the discussion presenting a spreadsheet with the prices the City received during the last RFP process. The information was distributed at the last meeting but staff reformatted the information so that it appears together on a sheet. There was a brief discussion and staff was asked to update the numbers with vendors.

Chip then went over the staff's assignment from the meeting of September 30, 2008. Four spreadsheets (attached) were distributed to the committee. Chip highlighted the bottom lines on each sheet. Referring the No Recycling sheet, Chip noted that the Transfer to the Solid Waste fund is currently \$1.9M and it would increase by about \$347,400 in Fiscal Year 2010 and \$603,700 in Fiscal

Year 2011 should the City elect to not to provide curbside recycling.. He then reviewed the spreadsheet for Weekly recycling noting that the analysis assumes that multifamily residents will receive containerized single-stream recycling and will recycle at the same 15% that curbside residents recycle now. He noted that the analysis indicates the general fund transfer would need to increase by approximately \$1.3M in FY10. He then discussed the third option, Weekly Recycling with Pay AsYouThrow. He noted the assumptions on this sheet are \$2/bag price and an increase in recycling rate which increases the avoided cost of disposal to an amount estimated to be approximately \$126,000. He noted the analysis indicates the avoided cost for weekly recycling is approximately \$31,500.

The committee members discussed weekly recycling's effect on the transfer. Staff pointed that in a weekly recycling scenario recycling will likely increase but not enough to substantially reduce transfer.

The committee also discussed the recent media coverage of Pay As You Throw. Some members voiced concern that some points in the article in the paper could be misinterpreted. Councilor Nyhan stated communication with the public is necessary and the committee agreed. Some members felt the article was premature. Councilor Nyhan volunteered to contact the reporter and provide some clarification

Councilor Keach asked whether there were communities that collect solid waste bi-weekly. The committee discussed bi-weekly collection. Ted Siegler noted that collection costs would not be cut in half because more trucks would be needed to provide the service. Natalie Starr discussed the solid waste program provided in Olympia, Washington, where bi-weekly trash collection is provided and financially supported, in part, with a Pay As You Throw program. The community experienced significant diversion rates. Committee members discussed storage issues and if this assumes single stream recycling.

Ted Siegler provided a preliminary brief of the solid waste sorting project that was performed earlier in the day. He noted the purpose of the program is to assess how much material is currently being diverted from the curbside residential solid waste stream and assess the potential for additional material that could be diverted by sorting through material that resident's had set out for solid waste collection and identifying what fraction of this material could be recycled. He noted the area where the sample was collected and noted that this is a week where recycling collection was being provided.. He noted the area is recycling about 21% of the material of the material placed at the curb; however, the rate could double to about 42 % if residents removed all recyclable material from the waste stream. He indicated that the community could increase recycling with an aggressive Pay As You Throw program and working harder at recycling. The committee discussed some of the possible reasons recycling is not higher. The reasons discussed include: confusion about what is allowed to be recycled in

the program, concern for privacy and possible identity theft and the size of the containers (bins vs carts).

Ted advised the committee that DSM advocates automated collection but recognizes deterrents such as the contractors in the area must buy trucks and need longer contracts to amortize them over and the cost of carts can be as high as a truck. He also answered questions about how the automated trucks work and the committee discussed savings, issues and the aesthetic value of automated collection. The difficulties of a Pay As You Throw program with carts were outlined as well as how carts could be used to do single stream recycling. The group's discussion moved through various items including mandatory recycling, illegal dumping, communities' experiences with Pay As You Throw and how quick automated collection can occur and provisions for lower income residents.

Councilor Nyhan noted that the automated collection is efficient but voiced concern about whether the City's current financials could sustain the start-up costs. He went over the finances with the group and Bob McManus explained the spreadsheets in more detail. Ted and Bob explained that the Pay As You Throw financial analysis is more an art than a science and Bob expressed a need for a healthy reserve to manage the unexpected. The discussion included explanations of what could happen if the committee and Council decided to continue to fund the entire solid waste budget with the tax base. The tax increases for solid waste would compete with other City services and Council would likely have to look for additional cuts at budget. Communication with the public is essential via newspaper and CCTV. Mike Russell commented that he would like to see Pay As You Throw using automated collection. Councilor Blanchard asked if the City could perform the service. Chip explained the difficulty for the City to get back in to the business. Ted explained how Pay As You Throw bags is the most efficient approach for a new program but larger recycling carts is good especially if continue bi-weekly recycling.

The committee asked staff to bring the following information to the next meeting:

1. Waste Management & Bestway - updated automated collection costs.
2. More work on the weekly recycling and PAYT
3. Look at a modified program –an allotment of free bags.
4. Look at needs based program.

The committee discussed the various meeting dates and the committees' goal (Maintain City services and not bankrupt the City) and the time table for making a decision.

It was agreed that the committee would continue their discussions at the next meeting which is scheduled for October 21 at 4:15 PM at the COMF.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 PM.